

workmen who were killed were members of St. Mary's, and they left behind their wives and 72 children.

In 1992, following a Mass that was held at St. Mary's in memory of the Twin Shaft victims, the congregation walked to the intersection of Main and Union streets for the unveiling of a historical marker near the site of the disaster.

The present church was built and dedicated in 1905. Among the many improvements and generous donations made over the years are the stained glass windows above the front doors, dedicated in memory of President John F. Kennedy, and the new organ purchased and installed in 1997, which was donated in memory of Helen Caslin Gill. The rectory contains a stained glass window donated by Mary T. Gallagher and installed in 1996 to mark the 10-year anniversary of the merger of the parish with St. Mary's Assumption Church.

The parish even has a home on the Internet to reach out across the World Wide Web, located at <http://www.stmarys-pittston.org>. This is one of many accomplishments and improvements made under the leadership of the current pastor, Rev. Richard J. Jalmounter, M.S., who was appointed in 1990. He has revitalized the Altar and Rosary Society, the Vacation Bible School, and the annual St. Jude Novena begun under Father Andrew P. Maloney, who served as parish administrator from 1956 to 1963 and pastor from 1963 to 1967. In 1995, Father Polmounter and Sister Anne Therese Peach founded St. Mary's Early Childhood Learning Center, which is located at the rectory in Upper Pittston.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call to the attention of the House of Representatives the 150 years of dedication and devotion of the pastors and people of St. Mary, Help of Christians Church, and I wish them all the best.

HONORING JOSE LEON GUERRERO
RIOS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on September 6, 2001, a statue will be unveiled in honor of a great pioneer in the development of Guam's educational system. The statue in honor of Jose Leon Guerrero Rios is to become a permanent fixture at the middle school in Piti also named after him.

The Honorable Jose L.G. Rios, was born in the city of Hagåtña on August 14, 1898. He was the son of Brigido Ayubon Rios and Josefa Garrido De Leon Guerrero. He was married to Antonia Duenas Leon Guerrero and they had eight children—Elizabeth Irene, Albert James, Joseph, Helen, Virginia, Eduardo, Teresita, and Ricardo. A career educator, Mr. Rios had the opportunity to mold students who would later become island leaders. Through his career as a classroom teacher, notable figures in Guam's history such as Richard Taitano, Lagrimas Untalan, Ben Reyes, and Edward Calvo were among the ranks of his students.

Mr. Rios first received recognition from monthly articles he wrote in 1915 and 1916 about various schools on Guam at the time. These articles, along with articles he wrote

about Chamorro folklore, contributed toward his selection in 1918 to be among four individuals picked by the Naval Government to receive higher education training at the Oklahoma A&M College in Stillwater, OK.

Upon his return to Guam, Mr. Rios gained prominence for his work toward the benefit of the island's educational system. The grade level structure in the island's elementary and junior high schools was established through his efforts. As president of the Guam Teacher's Association in 1924, he received great recognition for this accomplishment. In 1940, by virtue of an appointment by Governor Henry P. Price, Mr. Rios served as an Associate Justice in the Guam Court of Appeals—a position he held until the Japanese occupation in 1941. By 1944, he had served as principal for all of the island's elementary schools and, after the Japanese occupation, he served as principal of George Washington Junior High School. When the school was later designated as a Senior High School, Mr. Rios served as its Vice-Principal.

His contributions were greatly recognized and appreciated. The Government of Guam awarded him a "Gold Service Medal" upon his retirement in 1966 for having been of service for 51 years. Widely known as "Mr. Education," the College of Guam conferred to him an honorary "Bachelor in Community Service" degree in 1968 for his work toward the advancement of education in the community.

This great man passed away on July 24, 1983, leaving behind a distinguished legacy. As a former educator, I fully appreciate the value of Mr. Rios' endeavors and contributions. With the unveiling of the statue in Mr. Rios' honor, I am hopeful that it will become a reminder of the man's accomplishments and serve as an inspiration, most especially to the students of the school bearing his name, to strive toward the same remarkable ideals he had advocated during his lifetime. Si Yu'os Ma'ase' Tun Jose put todú i setbisu-mu para i tano'ta.

BIPARTISAN PATIENT
PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2563) to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage:

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, we were given an opportunity today to come to this House Floor and enact a bipartisan, widely supported version of the Patients' Bill of Rights. I urge all members to support this fine bill and oppose the industry backed Norwood Amendment, which will only eviscerate the patient protection America needs. H.R. 2563, in its original form, will provide the health care reform the Nation needs by:

1. Giving every American the right to choose his/her own doctor.

2. Covering all Americans with employer based health insurance.

3. Ensuring that independent physicians conduct all external reviews of medical decisions.

4. Holding HMOs accountable when they make faulty decisions.

H.R. 2563 requires health plans to establish both internal and external appeals processes for decisions that affect health care benefits. The process requires that all internal reviews be exhausted in a timely manner before an independent medical expert would be allowed to review the decisions made by the health plan.

Under H.R. 2563, patients will be permitted to protect their rights by allowing a cause of action in state court for medical decisions, and in federal court for administrative decisions that prevent patients from receiving care. H.R. 2563 respects federalism by allowing state law to control when suits are brought in state court. The legislation punishes bad faith on the part of providers, also, by allowing for non-economic damages of up to \$5 million as a civil monetary penalty.

H.R. 2563 represents the concerns of both patient and providers by providing a comprehensive and balanced system that provides fair access to health care and fair resolution of disputes. It does this by protecting employers from excessive liability. H.R. 2563 protects small businesses and others who delegate their healthcare decisions to experts. Employers are protected from legal liability unless they participate in a decision on a claim that results in harm to the patient.

Mr. Chairman, the benefit to patients this legislation will bring is important. This bill restores the patient's confidence in healthcare by guaranteeing emergency room coverage and ensuring timely access to healthcare. Also, Mr. Chairman, this legislation will protect the rights of women and children to access the specialized care they need. The bill provides direct access to OB/GYN care, as well as allowing parents to choose a pediatrician as their child's primary care provider.

I strongly urge all members to resist the Norwood amendment and any other attempt to alter what is already a compromise bill. The Norwood amendment would tilt the playing field in favor of institutional decision-makers. The proposed \$1.5 million cap on non economic and punitive damages does not accurately reflect the devastating impact of medical decisions that result in lifelong injuries. By requiring federal rules to apply in both state and federal court cases, the amendment also trounces the ideals of federalism.

This, however, is made almost irrelevant by the worst aspect of the Norwood amendment. If passed, this amendment would create a rebuttable presumption in favor of the decision of the independent reviewer, while at the same time giving the decision maker authority over who will do the independent review. Then the patient must produce clear and convincing evidence to overcome that presumption, a standard of proof just below that required for a criminal conviction. Thus, the standard required to review decisions actually limits the rights citizens would have in court. Also, the reviewer has no real incentive to be independent at all. This is not reform.

Mr. Chairman, the American people look to us to follow their wishes and enact real reform that puts the health of patients first. In order to do this, we must pass H.R. 2563. If we